

Students hold action supporting draft law on Aceh government

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Aceh Kita - April 3, 2006

Misdarul Ihsan, Banda Aceh — On Monday April 3, Acehnese student organisations from the Aceh Peace Alliance (AAD) once again held a demonstration in support of the Draft Law on Aceh Government (RUU-PA) that is currently being deliberated by the House of Representatives (DPR). The two hundred or so students held speeches and distributed leaflets at the Simpang Lima roundabout in Banda Aceh.

In one speech, a protester from the Aceh Student Association of Foster Mothers (Dayah) invited all elements of Acehnese society to launch a revolution if the draft law that is eventually ratified by the DPR is not in accordance with the Acehnese people's wishes. "We are demanding that the DPR be able to quickly ratify the RUU-PA in accordance with the [Acehnese] people's wishes", said the speaker.

During the speech, the student also said that they believe that the delays in the deliberation of the law are because there are certain parties that are playing around in order to thwart the rectification of the law. They also said that the Indonesian government has violated the Helsinki Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) because it reneged on the March 31 deadline mandated by the MoU.

Action coordinator Rahmad Jailani called on all elements of Acehnese society to continue speak out to struggle for their wishes to be accommodated in the draft law so that peace in Aceh will be everlasting. He said that if the people's wishes were not fully accommodated, then an even larger conflict would break out with the entire society joining the revolt.

According to Jailani, students will continue to hold actions until the draft law is ratified in accordance with the people's wishes. "[Those here] today are just a fraction of the masses, we will

mobilise many more again, as before, if the central [government] betrays the Acehnese people. We will continue to hold actions", he said.

Notes:

In an earlier report on the same day, Aceh Kita said that in addition to Dayah, the other student organisations planning to participate in the action included Student's Solidarity for the People (SMUR), the Association of Islamic Students (HMI) and the Indonesian Islamic High-School Students (PII).

[Translated by James Balowski.]